



# **Birchwood Attendance Policy**

Version 1:03 adopted from KCC Policy

Issue Date – May 2020 (updated September 20 – COVID Appendix 15)

Approved by Management Committee:

Review Date: May 2021

## **Statement of Intent**

Birchwood is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all our pupils. Regular attendance is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them.

One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience. We actively promote 100% attendance for all our pupils and we use a variety of weekly, termly and annual awards to promote good attendance and punctuality.

The Management Committee, Head Teacher and Staff in partnership with parents have a duty to promote full attendance at Birchwood.

## **Parental Responsibility**

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children attend school regularly and arrive on time. Regular attendance is essential to the all-round development of the child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them in order to make good progress in their learning. Poor attendance undermines their educational attainment and progress and, sometimes, puts pupils at risk by encouraging anti-social behaviour.

**It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school on the first day their child is absent and each day thereafter. This is a safeguarding issue requirement so that all parties know that your child is safe and their whereabouts is known. Parents should regularly update the school and inform the school when their child is returning.**

Pupils are expected to arrive by 8.45am. All pupils that arrive late must report to the school office or to a member of support staff where the reason for lateness can be recorded.

## **The Role of the School Staff**

At Birchwood there is a whole school responsibility and approach for improving school attendance, with specific staff taking individual responsibility.

The Multi Agency Engagement Lead has overall responsibility for monitoring attendance issues and will complete a register at the beginning of each morning and once during the afternoon session.

Marking the attendance registers twice daily is a legal requirement. (The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006). Teachers mark pupils present, absent or late.

It is the responsibility of Multi Agency Engagement Lead to ensure:

- Attendance and lateness records are up to date
- If no reason for absence has been provided, parents are contacted on the first day of absence by phone call.
- Where there has been no communication, letters are sent to parents requesting reasons for absence.
- The appropriate attendance code is entered into the register (see National Attendance Codes)
- Parents are informed termly of the child's attendance figure

#### **Timeline of the Staged Approach for Managing Poor Attendance**

- 95 - 100% attendance – the Multi Agency Engagement Lead to contact parents if appropriate.
- 90 - 95% attendance - school intervention letters/meeting with parents
- Where the level of absence has not improved and there are unauthorised absences, the school will make a referral to the KCC Inclusion and Attendance Service using the Digital Front Door. If it is not clear a referral to the Service is appropriate, the school will consult with the Local Authority School Liaison Officer for advice.
- For the cases that require intensive family support, the school may make an Early Help Notification.

#### **Children Missing Education**

No child should be removed from the school roll without consultation between the Headteacher and the Inclusion and Attendance Service when appropriate. Please see the circumstances below:-

Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority guidance will be followed, by completing a Child Missing Education referral for the following circumstances:-

- If the whereabouts of the child is unknown and the school has failed to locate him/her.
- The family has notified the school that they are leaving the area but no Common Transfer Form (pupil file) has been requested by another school.

## **Reduced Time Tables**

There may be occasions when a reduced timetable or the offer of Twilight Sessions for a limited period of time would be beneficial for a student on roll at Birchwood. Twilight sessions are when a pupil attends after school has finished and works with a member of staff.

A reduced time table will only be considered in exceptional circumstances for the following reasons.

1. As part of a planned re-integration into school following an extended period out of school due to exclusion, non-attendance, school refusal or to facilitate a managed transfer between schools.
2. As a temporary fixed-term, closely monitored intervention to address and manage the impact of significantly challenging behaviour or emotional or social needs, whilst alternative arrangements are being made to meet the individual needs or to coordinate with therapeutic intervention or other services.

At Birchwood we will aim to use reduced time tables only when absolutely necessary and parental permission will be sought before implementing it. It will be part of the pupils Pastoral Support Plan, which will be regularly reviewed. The absences will be coded as C which is an authorised absence.

If a pupil has an EHCP or is receiving High Needs Funding a discussion will be held with SEN Service in order to confirm they are in agreement with the plan. A looked-after child should not be placed with a reduced timetable unless the Social Worker or Virtual School Kent agrees to it.

All reduced time tables will be logged through the Digital Front door.

## **Lateness**

At Birchwood the register is taken at 9.00am and 12pm. Pupils arriving after these times must enter school and report to a member of support staff, where their name and the reason for lateness will be recorded. The pupil will be marked as late before registration has closed (Code 'L') and will receive a 15 minute detention which will take place after school.

The register will close at 9.30am and 1.00pm. Pupils arriving after the register has closed will be marked as late after registration (Code 'U') and this will count as an unauthorised absence.

Frequent lateness after the register has closed (U) will be discussed with parents and could provide grounds for prosecution or a Penalty Notice.

## **Penalty Notice Proceedings for Lateness**

**Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with Kent County Council's Education Penalty Notices Code of Conduct effective from January 2016, as revised in April 2017, when:**

- 10 incidents of late arrival after the registers have closed during any possible 100 school sessions leads to a Penalty Notice Warning Letter.
- The Penalty Notice Warning Letter sets out 15 school days during which no unauthorised absence is to be recorded
- If unauthorised absence is recorded during the 15 day period, a Penalty Notice(s) will be issued (one per parent per child)
- Where a Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days of issue the Local Authority will instigate court proceedings

## **Authorising Absence**

Only the Head Teacher can authorise absence using a consistent approach. The Head Teacher is not obliged to accept a parent's explanation. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. If absences are not authorised, parents will be notified.

If no explanation is received, absences will not be authorised.

Absence during term time can only be approved in "exceptional circumstances". The following reasons are examples of absence that will not be authorised:

- Persistent non specific illness e.g. poorly/unwell
- Absence of siblings if one child is ill
- Oversleeping
- Inadequate clothing/uniform
- Confusion over school dates
- Medical/dental appointments of more than half a day without very good reasons
- Child's/family birthday
- Shopping trip
- Family Holidays

Persistent unauthorised absence (10% or more of the school year) may result in an AS1 referral to the Local Authority School Liaison Officer for consideration of prosecution. The school will follow procedures prior to referral and parents will be notified in writing.

When a referral is made, the child's Registration Certificate, copies of all letters sent to parents and minutes of any meetings need to be attached to the completed AS1 referral form with any other relevant information.

### **Local Authority Action may include:-**

- Attendance Improvement Meeting
- Home visits
- Liaison with other agencies
- Fast Track to Prosecution

### **Penalty Notices Proceedings for Poor Attendance**

**Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with Kent County Council's Education Penalty Notices Code of Conduct effective from January 2016 and revised in April 2017.**

- A Penalty Notice can only be issued in cases of absence for 10 or more half day sessions (5 school days) without authorisation during any 100 possible school sessions or period of 50 days of schooling – these do not need to be consecutive.
- A Penalty Notice can also be issued where an excluded child is found in a public place during school hours.
- After the appropriate request for a Penalty Notice is received, the KCC Inclusion and Attendance Service will issue a warning letter setting out 15 school days during which no unauthorised absence is to be recorded
- If unauthorised absence is recorded during the 15 day period a Penalty Notice will be issued (one per parent per child)

#### **Exceptional circumstances could include:**

- Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the parent will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent's or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
- To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family.

Any examples provided are illustrative rather than exhaustive. It is acceptable to take a pupil's previous record of attendance into account when the school is making decisions. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, unavoidable and short. And by 'unavoidable' it implies that an event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. It is important to note that Head Teacher can agree the absence of a child in exceptional circumstances and this discretion can be used also to determine the length of the authorised absence.

Where Penalty Notices are imposed, the regulations state that the penalty will be £120 to be paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child. Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 28 day period will result in prosecution by the Local Authority.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 says that parents are **guilty** of an offence of failing to secure regular attendance at school unless they can prove that the child was absent:

- with leave (the school has given permission)
- due to sickness or any unavoidable cause (the sickness or unavoidable cause must relate to the child, not the parent)
- religious observance
- failure by the Local Authority to provide transport

In law, these are the only acceptable reasons for a child being absent from school.

The Head Teacher may authorise absence in “exceptional circumstances” but this must be requested in advance and agreement to each request is at the discretion of the Headteacher, acting on behalf of the Management Committee (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006). Each case will be judged on its merits and the Head Teacher’s decision is final. Once the decision not to authorise leave is taken, it cannot be authorised retrospectively.

If the absence is not authorised and the holiday is taken anyway, the case may be referred to the Inclusion and Attendance Service who may issue a Penalty Notice to each parent for each child taken out of school.

Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 28 day period will result in prosecution by the Local Authority.

**Appendix 1 Late letter (Code L)**

**Appendix 2 Late letter (Code U)**

**Appendix 3 Absence Letter**

**Appendix 4 School Attendance Meeting Letter**

**Appendix 5 School Letter Warning re: Penalty Notice Referral**

**Appendix 6 Unauthorised absence confirmation of PN request**

**Appendix 7a Response to Leave Request (Not Authorising)**

**Appendix 7b Response to Leave Request submitted retrospectively (Not Authorising)**

**Appendix 8 Unauthorised leave confirmation of PN request**

**Appendix 9 School letter where they believe a holiday was taken**

**Appendix 10 Traveller Attendance letter**

**Appendix 11 Traveller Absence due to travelling**

**Appendix 12 School Referral Pathway**

**Appendix 13 School Attendance Leaflet**

**Appendix 14 Covid-19 Absence Coding Guidance**

**Appendix 15 Recording attendance during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak**

## Appendix 1

«addressee»

«address\_block»

«date\_of\_printing»

Dear «salutation»

**Re «forename» «surname»**

I am writing to express my concern over the number of occasions that «forename» has been arriving late at school. Below for your information is a summary of attendance indicating the days «forename» was late (Code L):

«dates\_of\_lates\_before»

Total lates before registration closed: «total\_lates\_before» half day sessions

At our school the register is taken at ?? am and at ?? pm.

A pupil's lateness will seriously disrupt their learning and can be embarrassing for your child.

I am sure you share my concern and would wish to work with the school to improve punctuality. If we can help in any way, perhaps via our School Nurse or Family Liaison Officer, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

## Appendix 2

«addressee»  
«address\_block»

«date\_of\_printing»

Dear «salutation»

**Re «forename» «surname»**

I am writing to express my concern over the number of occasions that «forename» has arrived after the register has been closed. Below for your information is a summary of attendance indicating the days «forename» was late (Code U):

«dates\_of\_lates\_after»

Total lates after registration closed: «total\_lates\_after» half day sessions

At our school the register is taken at ?? am and is closed at ?? am for the morning session and taken again at ?? pm and closed at ?? pm for the afternoon session. Pupils arriving after the register has closed will be marked 'U' which records the absence as unauthorised for that session.

Arriving after the register has closed is seriously disrupting your child's learning and is impacting on their overall attendance.

Persistent late arrival may lead to a referral for a Penalty Notice or a referral to the Local Authority School Liaison Officer for further action and possible prosecution.

If «forename» continues to arrive late after the register has closed we will contact you to arrange a meeting at the school.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

## Appendix 3

«addressee»

«address\_block»

«date\_of\_printing»

Dear «salutation»

**Re «forename» «surname»**

I am writing to express my concern over the number of occasions that «forename» has been absent from school. I attach for your information a summary of attendance indicating the days «forename» was absent.

A pupil's absence can seriously disrupt their learning, not only do they miss out on teaching while they are away but they are less prepared for future lessons when they return.

I am sure you share my concern and would wish to work with the school to improve «forename»'s attendance. If we can help in any way, perhaps via our School Nurse or Family Liaison Officer, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

## Appendix 4

«addressee»

«address\_block»

«date\_of\_printing»

Dear «salutation»

**Re: «forename» «surname»**

Despite previous warnings, I note with concern that your child's attendance at school has made no significant improvement. «forename»'s attendance at school is currently «percentage\_attendance»% which means «he\_she» has missed «total\_authorised\_absences» half day sessions for authorised absence and «total\_unauthorised\_absences» half day sessions for unauthorised absence. This will have an impact on your child's education which we cannot ignore.

As there has been no improvement in «forename»'s attendance, I must advise you that further absences from school as a result of illness may require medical evidence (e.g. copy of a prescription, Doctors/Dentist appointment card). If medical evidence is not provided when required, further absences will be marked as unauthorised.

I am inviting you to attend a School Attendance Meeting. The time and date have been set for ?? at ?? It is important that you and «forename» attend this meeting for us to explore the issues around poor attendance. The meeting will be attended by:

??

If this appointment is inconvenient, I would be grateful if you could contact me so that an alternative time can be arranged.

If you do not attend this meeting and «forename»'s absence continues to deteriorate, a referral may be made to the Local Authority School Liaison Officer for further action and possible prosecution.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher  
The School

## Appendix 5

«addressee»

«address\_block»

«date\_of\_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Re «forename» «surname»

At our school we consider attendance of utmost importance and I am therefore bringing this information to your attention.

Our monitoring process has shown that «forename» has been absent from school for a total of «total\_unauthorised\_absences» unauthorised half day sessions. I refer you to legislation regarding Penalty Notices.

*'As from 2005, Kent Local Authority (LA) introduced Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence from school of at least 10 sessions (5 days) during any 100 possible school sessions.'* A separate Penalty Notice can be issued to each parent and for each child.

*On receipt of the Notice, the penalty will be £120, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the penalty in full at the end of the 28 day period may result in prosecution by the LA.*

Please note this is a warning letter that a Penalty Notice could be requested if a total of 10 unauthorised sessions (5 days) are reached.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further please do not hesitate to contact me.

If further unauthorised absence occurs you will be contacted and invited in for a meeting at the school.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

## Appendix 6

«addressee»

«address\_block»

«date\_of\_printing»

Dear «salutation»

**Re «forename» «surname»**

With reference to our letter dated ??, «forename» has now reached a total of «total\_unauthorised\_absences» half day sessions of unauthorised absence. As a result we will now be requesting a Penalty Notice from the Local Authority.

A separate Penalty Notice can be issued to each parent and for each child.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

## Appendix 7a

«addressee»

«address\_block»

«date\_of\_printing»

Dear «salutation»

### **Request for leave during Term-Time**

**For the attention of the parents of «forename» «surname»**

I have received your request to take «forename» out of school for a family holiday between ??date and ??date, a total of ??Number of school sessions.

From September 2013 the Department for Education has amended the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 removing the Head Teacher's ability to authorise leave of absence for a family holiday. Requests for holidays in term-time will not be authorised as the Regulations only allow me to authorise absence (leave) in "exceptional circumstances".

The School's Attendance Policy confirms that:

- agreement to each request is at my discretion, acting on behalf of the Governing Body
- each case will be judged on its merits
- my decision is final
- leave cannot be authorised retrospectively

I have considered your request but I am writing to confirm that on this occasion the leave will not be authorised. If you decide to take «forename» out of school I will be making a request for a Penalty Notice to be issued.

Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child and the amount of the penalty will be £120 to be paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the penalty in full at the end of the 28 day period may result in prosecution by the Attendance Service.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

## Appendix 7b

«addressee»

«address\_block»

«date\_of\_printing»

Dear «salutation»

### **Request for leave during Term-Time**

**For the attention of the parents of «forename» «surname»**

You failed to apply in advance for permission for «forename» to be absent from school.

From September 2013 the Department for Education has amended the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 removing the Head Teacher's ability to authorise leave of absence for a family holiday. Requests for holidays in term-time will not be authorised as the Regulations only allow me to authorise absence (leave) in "exceptional circumstances".

The School's Attendance Policy confirms that:

- agreement to each request is at my discretion, acting on behalf of the Governing Body
- each case will be judged on its merits
- my decision is final
- leave cannot be authorised retrospectively

As stated above, I am unable to authorise leave retrospectively and I will be making a request for a Penalty Notice to be issued.

Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child and the amount of the penalty will be £120 to be paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the penalty in full at the end of the 28 day period may result in prosecution by the Attendance Service.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

## Appendix 8

«addressee»

«address\_block»

«date\_of\_printing»

Dear «salutation»

**Name: «forename» «surname» DOB: «date\_of\_birth»**

With reference to our letter dated **??date**, the leave of absence taken between **??date** and **??date** has now been recorded as Unauthorised Absence and as a result a Penalty Notice has been requested.

A separate Penalty Notice can be issued to each parent and for each child.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

## Appendix 9

«addressee»

«address\_block»

«date\_of\_printing»

Dear «salutation»

**Re «forename» «surname»**

You failed to apply in advance for permission for «forename» to be absent from school.

From September 2013 the Department for Education has amended the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 removing the Head Teacher's ability to authorise leave of absence, except in exceptional circumstances. ***(State why you are treating this absence as a family holiday and/or why there are no exceptional circumstances)***

Requests for holidays in term-time will not be authorised as the Regulations only allow me to authorise absence (leave) in "exceptional circumstances".

I am unable to authorise leave retrospectively therefore this absence will be recorded as unauthorised absence, where a child has 10 unauthorised sessions within 100 school session a Penalty Notice may be issued.

The Penalty Notice gives you the opportunity to pay a penalty instead of being prosecuted for failing to secure your child's regular attendance at school. The amount of the penalty is £120 per parent, per child, but if payment is made by you within 21 days of receipt of this Notice it will be £60 per parent, per child. If you pay this penalty within the time limits, no further action will be taken against you in connection with the offence, i.e. your liability for the offence will be discharged.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

## Appendix 10

«addressee»

«address\_block»

«date\_of\_printing»

Dear «salutation»

### **Traveller Absence**

**«forename» «surname»**

I am writing to say how concerned I am over the number of times «forename» has been absent from school. This academic year «forename» has missed «total\_authorised\_absences» authorised half day sessions and «total\_unauthorised\_absences» unauthorised half day sessions achieving an overall attendance rate of «percentage\_attendance»%.

Traveller children have to attend school for 380 sessions (190 days) each year, which is the same for all children and you are at risk of being referred to the Local Authority School Liaison Officer if «forename»'s attendance falls below 90%. I am unable to authorise any absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances or if you will be travelling for occupational purposes and agree this with the school in advance.

If you would like to speak to me about «forename»'s attendance, please telephone the school to make an appointment.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

## Appendix 11

«addressee»

«address\_block»

«date\_of\_printing»

Dear «salutation»

### **Traveller Absence**

**«forename» «surname»**

Thank you for contacting me to say that «forename» will be absent from school from **??Date** as you will be travelling due to your work.

The law allows me to authorise «forename»'s absence if your trade or business means that you have to travel from place to place. However, you have not let me know when «forename» is likely to return to school. Unless you contact me during the next 10 school days to confirm a date, I will refer «forename» to the Local Authority as a Child Missing Education.

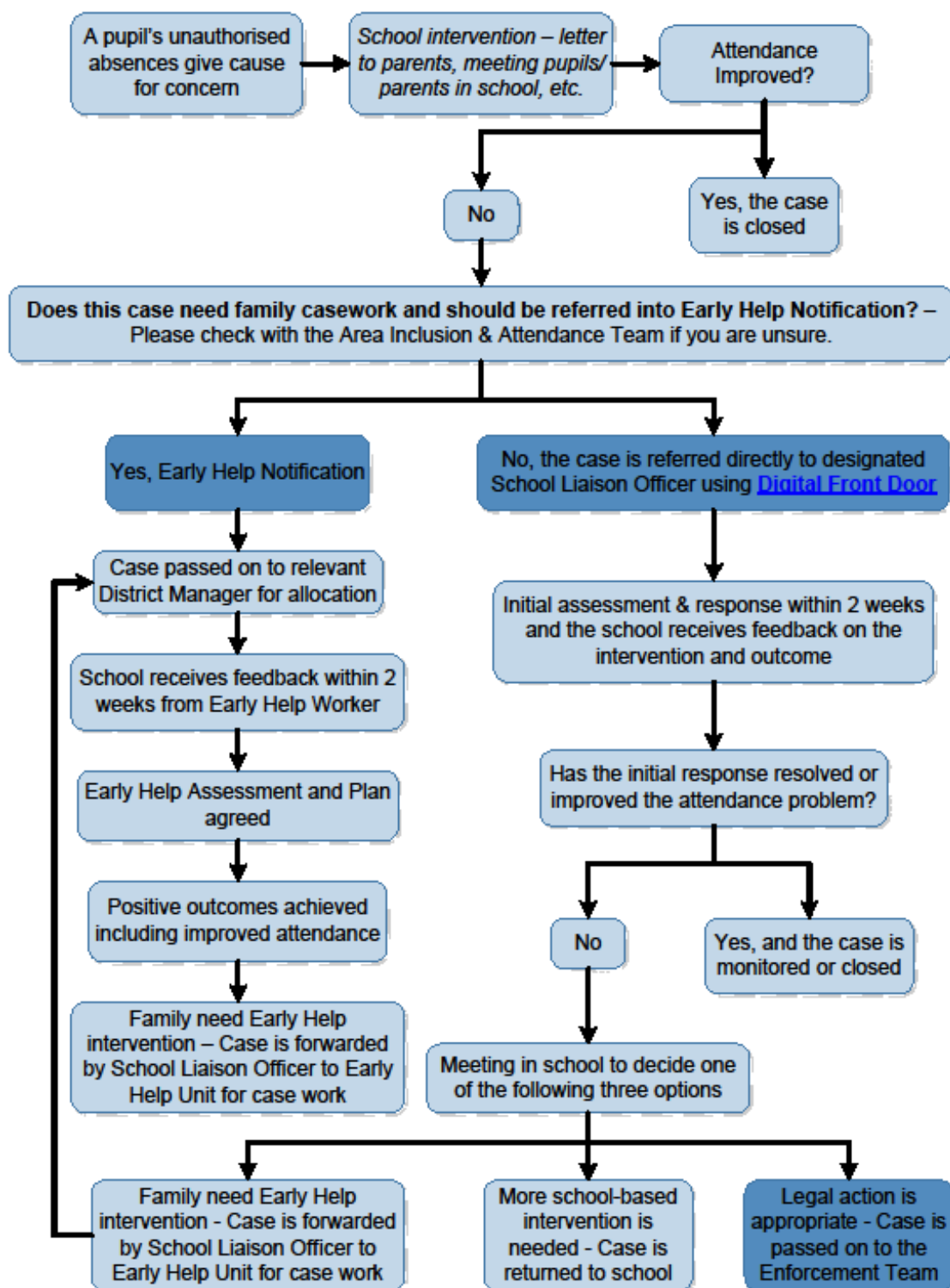
After 20 days absence, there may be grounds to take «forename»'s name off the school roll and you will have to re-apply for a school place when you return.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

## Appendix 12

### Kent School Referral Pathway – Pupil Attendance



**Appendix 13**

[School Attendance Leaflet FINAL.docx](#)

## CoVID-19 Absence Coding guidance

### 17 March 2020

#### Appendix 14

On 16 March 2020 the DfE issued updated CoVID-19 guidance for schools and this included basic rules to follow in terms of recording school absences.

We have taken that advice and expanded it to include a number of specific scenarios that we know Kent schools are having to deal with. The information below is guidance only and we expect each case to be looked at on its own merits and for school leaders to ultimately determine how each absence is recorded.

#### Scenarios and suggested action:

- A school has advised a student/pupil to not attend school and go into self-isolation for 14 days because they are displaying symptoms. The parent/carer or student/pupil wish to attend school.  
Action : The school should insist that the student does not attend school and mark as code 'Y'. If Covid-19 is confirmed, use code 'I'.
- A school has advised a student/pupil to not attend school and go into self-isolation for 14 days because they are displaying symptoms. The parent/carer or student/pupil are content to not attend school.  
Action : No action. Use code 'Y'. If Covid-19 is confirmed, use code 'I'.
- A student contacts the school and reports that they are or a family member is displaying symptoms.  
Action : The student should stay away from school for 14 days, and should be reminded that all who live in the house should do the same. Use code 'Y'. If Covid-19 is confirmed for the student, use code 'I'.
- A student contacts the school and reports that they have symptoms and have seen a doctor who has told them to stay off school for 14 days.  
Action : The student should stay away from school for 14 days. Use code 'I'.
- A student/pupil has presented with Covid-19 symptoms and is in the care of the medical services.  
Action : The student/pupil must not return until given the all-clear by clinicians, and no other members of the family living in their home are showing any symptoms. Use code 'I'.
- A parent has informed the school that in their opinion, it is not safe for their child to go to school and no member of the household is displaying symptoms. PHE have not placed the school under any restrictions or advised to close. The school remains open.  
Action : The student/pupil should be in school. The appropriate non-attendance procedures should be enacted. The attendance code should be O, absence not authorised.

- A parent has informed the school that in a doctors opinion, it is not safe for their child to go to school, as either they or other family members are resident in the same house are at a greater risk of infection. The school remains open.

Action : Use attendance code could be 'Y'. However, the school should continue to monitor the situation.
- A parent has informed the school that it is not safe for their child to go to school, as they believe they or other family members who are resident in the same house are at a greater risk of infection. No medical advice has been sought. The school remains open.

Action : This is a judgement call for the school based on knowledge of family etc. In most cases it is likely this would be a 'Y' code but it would be advisable to speak with the family and suggest they seek PHE advice before deciding on such action.
- A school orders a partial or full closure, that is supported by PHE in light of an outbreak at, or associated with the school.

Action : Affected student/pupils should not attend school or any school activities. The code used should be Code 'Y'.
- A school orders a closure or partial closure, that is not ordered by Government or PHE.

Action : KCC would not recommend that the school should close, however school closure is at the discretion of the Headteacher depending on the outcome of a risk assessment and individual circumstances. Maintained schools should be mindful of the obligations placed on them through the Education (School Day and School Year) (England) Regulations 1999 to be open for 380 sessions. The parent would have the right to complain to the school with regard to a possible unauthorised exclusion or failure to provide appropriate education.
- The school is open and the student/pupil wishes to attend, but transport or staffing difficulties exacerbated solely by Covid-19 result in it being impossible or very difficult for the student/pupil to get to school.

Action : Parents should make every effort to get their child to school, but if impossible, the student/pupil should stay at home, contact the school. If the school can determine that the absence is caused entirely or mostly by Covid-19, the code used should be 'Y'.
- The school is closed by local or national government decision.

Action : No student/pupils should attend school or any school activities.

The code used should be Code 'Y'.

## Appendix 15

### **Recording attendance during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak 28 May 2020**

**On 28<sup>th</sup> May 2020, the DfE issued updated procedures as to what educational settings will need to do to record attendance.**

1. Schools should resume taking an attendance register.
2. Schools should use the codes suggested on this page to record attendance and absence in the attendance register.

#### **Resuming the attendance register**

Schools should:

- resume taking the attendance register when more groups of pupils begin to return to school
- consider using the attendance and absence codes in the following sections when completing the attendance register until further notice

This guidance on resuming the attendance register will be reviewed regularly as the situations develops.

#### **Pupils who are not eligible to attend a session.**

This includes any pupil who is not in an eligible year group or priority group (children of critical workers and vulnerable children). This may also include children who are in an eligible year group but are not required in school for a specific session, i.e., year 10 and year 12 pupils who are not among the quarter of pupils expected in school at a given time.

They should be recorded as code X (not required to be in school). (Temporarily, code X can be used for compulsory school age children – usually it is only used where non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.)

#### **Pupils who are eligible to attend a session but do not.**

This includes children in eligible year groups, children of critical workers and vulnerable children, such as:

- where a pupil is shielding, self-isolating ([see note 1](#)), or the pupil has an education, health and care plan (EHCP) and their risk assessment says that their needs cannot be safely met in school, they should be recorded as code Y (unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances). (Temporarily, code Y can be used where a pupil is prevented from attending school due to following government guidance on coronavirus). To help you to complete the educational setting status form, you should note whether the absence is due to shielding or isolation
- where a pupil cannot attend school due to illness, as would normally be the case, the pupil should be recorded as code I (illness). To help you to complete the educational setting status form, you should note whether the illness involves coronavirus symptoms
- where a pupil does not attend school - despite being eligible and is not shielding, self-isolating, unable to attend due to illness, nor has an EHCP risk assessment saying their

needs cannot be safely met at school, the pupil should be recorded as code C (leave of absence authorised by the school) where no other authorised absence code is appropriate. At this time, all absence should be classed as authorised.

### **Using other authorised absence and attendance codes**

Where other specific authorised absence and attendance codes are more appropriate schools may want to use these as usual, such as code M (medical appointment).

### **Staggered start times**

Schools should have a policy on how long the register should be kept open but where a school implements staggered start times, they may wish to consider temporarily extending this period, or reopening the register.

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#### **Note 1**

Schools should use these principles and guidance to decide if pupils are shielding or self-isolating:

- children and young people who have been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable due to pre-existing medical conditions have been advised to shield. Clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) people are those considered to be at a higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus. Few if any children will fall into this category, but parents should follow medical advice if their child is in this category
- child or young person who lives with someone who is clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable), including those who are pregnant, can attend their education or childcare setting
- if a child or young person or staff member lives in a household with someone who is extremely clinically vulnerable, as set out in the guidance on shielding, it is advised they only attend an education or childcare setting if stringent social distancing can be adhered to and, in the case of children, if they are able to understand and follow those instructions - this may not be possible for very young children and older children without the capacity to adhere to the instructions on social distancing. If stringent social distancing cannot be adhered to, we do not expect those individuals to attend
- children or young people should not attend if they have symptoms or are self-isolating due to symptoms in their household